

Sine Die Speech 2010
Governor Dave Heineman
101st Legislature – 2nd Session

Mr. President, Mr. Speaker, Members of the Legislature, Friends and Fellow Nebraskans:

At the beginning of this session, I outlined my vision for ensuring a strong future for Nebraska this year and in the years ahead. That vision is reflected in three priorities – growing our economy, strengthening education, and developing an even more efficient government for our state.

As we gather at the end of this year's legislative session, our state has been strengthened by our partnership.

We are in an exceptional and enviable position in comparison to our neighbors and our colleagues across the country. Nebraska's financial health and stability is stronger than most of our peers, because we have worked together and because we put a priority on being fiscally responsible. For example, prior to last year's special session, Nebraska faced a significant revenue shortfall.

We acted decisively to address the \$335 million shortfall. In just 12 days we reduced spending rather than raising taxes and the budget was adopted with a unanimous vote.

In this session, your actions kept the budget in balance. We stuck to the basic principle that has served Nebraskans and our state so well: We don't spend money we don't have.

Nebraska is moving forward. Our efforts to grow our economy and to provide a more business-friendly environment are working. Forbes ranks Nebraska as one of the 'Best States for Business.' Additionally, Nebraska is ranked third in terms of fiscal fitness.

Our commitment to fiscally responsible policies, both in the private and public sectors, has resulted in Nebraska having the second lowest unemployment rate in America. Our strategic decisions have placed us in a position to weather Nebraska's financial challenges.

During this session, we were also able to take several actions that have positioned our state to take advantage of new opportunities.

The Nebraska Advantage Transformational Tourism and Redevelopment Act will provide local residents with the opportunity to approve economic development efforts connected to tourism and community revitalization. It adds to the package of incentives already contained in the Nebraska Advantage.

This provides an opportunity for residents to decide what kind of economic development opportunities they want to support by helping developers recoup some of the costs of building attractions that benefit area residents and businesses.

Sine Die Speech, Governor Dave Heineman – Page 2

The Nebraska Advantage has been successful in attracting new business interest to our state and creating opportunities for local companies to expand. This addition will encourage new opportunities that add to the quality of life factors important to individuals and families.

LB 1048 marks the beginning of accelerated wind energy development in Nebraska. This legislation, combined with previous wind energy legislation, will help Nebraska achieve its wind energy potential.

I fully expect Nebraska to be a Top 10 wind energy producing state by 2020. This legislation reflects Nebraska's commitment to clean energy, energy independence, rural economic development and jobs for rural Nebraska.

You have also tackled several other difficult and significant issues including juvenile justice, increased transparency in government and historic prolife legislation. At a time when the national dialogue is more likely to be contentious than collegial, more divisive than unified, our discussions are responsible, respectful and productive.

In our state, we put Nebraska's best interests above any special interest. We work together for the common good of Nebraska.

I am proud of our state and our citizens. There is no better place to live, to work and to raise a family than right here in Nebraska.

Thank you for your work on behalf of our citizens. This was a good session.

Thank you.